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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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## INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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THE SOURCE EVALUATIONS IN THIS REPORT ARE DEFINITIVE.  
THE APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.  
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1. The use of propaganda to influence the youth of the country begins from the earliest age, and teachers in Latvian schools are required to use every opportunity for introducing Communist teaching into every lesson on every subject by means of appropriate political, anti-religious, and pro-Communist examples and quotations. The method of teaching every subject is strictly regulated, and a careful check is maintained to see that the teachers conform to the rules.
2. All schools are subordinate to the Educational Department of the Central Committee of the Republic Communist Party and directly under the supervision of the local Raykom and Gorkom education departments, who also are responsible for the appointment of teachers. Schools are inspected from time to time, every few months, by Inspection Brigades which are organized by the local authorities. At less frequent intervals, inspections are carried out by higher-level teams of inspectors, comprised of specialists from the Educational Department of the Central Committee of the Party, and very occasionally, perhaps once in every three years, there is an extra special and extremely thorough inspection known as a Frontalnaya Proverka. The latter consists of a "brigade" of experts arriving unexpectedly at the school and remaining for a number of days. In the course of the visit, every aspect of the functioning of the school, every lesson, every item in the accounts, "every scrap of paper" is closely examined and checked. If the findings of any inspection are not favorable, the result may be the instant dismissal of the director or a member of the staff. If a director or teacher is dismissed, he may be demoted and permitted to take up a subordinate post in some other school, or he may be banned altogether from the teaching profession.
3. The director of a school and the deputy director who, in larger schools, is in charge of studies, must limit their hours of teaching (in secondary schools this is from 10 to 12 hours per week) in order to exercise supervision over the teaching staff by sitting in on their lessons. The director of studies, or Zavuch (Zaveduyushchiy Ucheboy), in a seven-class secondary school, for example,

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must devote at least two hours per day to such supervision. Leaders of Pioneers are also required to spend a certain time on supervision of this kind. Junior or inexperienced teachers are required to sit in on lessons of senior or more expert teachers to study their technique and profit from their experience. All teachers are required to strive continually to improve their own qualifications by attending courses, lectures, and conferences.

4. The teachers in Latvian schools are mainly Latvians who were trained in the period which they refer to in private as "the time of Latvian Independence". In public, this must only be referred to as "the days of bourgeois Latvia." These teachers are gradually being replaced by a younger generation which is more thoroughly imbued with Communist doctrine. Every teacher is required to take an active part in spreading Communist propaganda and to serve, in and out of school, as a Communist agitator. When political campaigns or elections take place, for example, the director of a school is allotted a certain district to cover, and he must appoint members of his staff to carry out house-to-house visits as canvassers and agitators. So numerous are the activities in which teachers are required to take part that they have no personal leisure whatever. It is felt that this is done deliberately to keep them incessantly occupied, in order to leave no time or opportunity for dangerous thinking or conversation.
5. Teaching is nevertheless a popular profession among Latvian youth, and there is no lack of young persons wishing to take it up as a career. It offers good opportunities for advancement and promotion, good holidays, and possibilities for travel throughout the Soviet Union. The position of the teacher has been improved, and precise rules are laid down to govern the maintenance of discipline among the pupils and to uphold the authority of the teacher.
6. Classes may not exceed 45 and usually number 30 to 40 pupils. The close supervision of the teachers ensures that discipline in class is observed, and a teacher who fails to keep his class in order is not allowed to remain for long in his post. He must either learn to improve his methods or seek another post. In theory, discipline is maintained by persuasion, firmness, patience, and encouragement to follow the example of the outstanding pupils (*otlichniki*), and there must be no punishment, abuse, or sarcasm. In practice, however, this is not always observed. The tone of the school is set by the director, and his influence can be felt throughout the school.
7. An unruly pupil may be made to stand up in his place in class (but not to stand in the corner), or he may be sent out of the room. If an offender's conduct affects the behavior of the rest of the class, his parents are informed. If their influence does not bring about the necessary improvement, the matter may be brought before the teachers' council for consideration, and they may recommend the pupil's removal to another school, where he may benefit from new environment and companions. Such action is not taken without consent of the parents, who have the responsibility, but little option, in such cases. If the offender is exceptionally hard to manage, he may be sent to a special school for difficult pupils (*shkola trudno vospitayemykh*).
8. Since the method of teaching every subject is strictly defined, obviously no deviation is tolerated. However, when witnesses (such as another teacher or a supervisory group) in class are not present, the Latvian teachers who are nationalists at heart take advantage of the opportunity to combat Communist influence by teaching their pupils about the achievements of independent Latvia. Thus, a teacher can keep alive the national spirit and convey to his pupils the hope of liberation from the Communist yoke and the return of national independence, together with the idea of paying only lip-service to the Communists. Latvians on the whole, it is claimed, tacitly understand now that it is not what you say, but how you say it, that matters. Therefore, older pupils in secondary schools and students in higher educational establishments understand their teachers almost without words. There are certain silences, an inflection of voice, or a look in the eyes that make such mutual understanding quite clear. In this manner, therefore, Communist propaganda can be offset by careful innuendo, but this requires courage and skill on the part of the teachers. The consequences of discovery might be very grave.

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9. The strongest vehicles for Communist propaganda are, of course, history, geography, and literature. Teachers of such subjects are therefore selected with special care, even though the textbooks on every subject in the curriculum have been rewritten, and only the new ones in the Russian and Latvian languages are available. The textbooks which have been translated from the Russian meet with little approval from the Latvian teachers because, in addition to their political bias, they are often straight translations, containing crude phraseology and lacking in style. The selection of teachers of important subjects such as history, for example, is the joint responsibility of the Raykom Party and educational authorities, and appointments to teaching posts are made by the latter only on the recommendation of the former and registered in the records of the Rayon Party Committee.
10. Since it is a reflection on the teacher if a pupil fails to pass on to the next class at the end of the school year and a serious reflection on the whole school if there is a large proportion of pupils who do not make the grade, the teacher must give backward pupils extra tutoring after school hours. A backward pupil may be kept in after school and given extra work to do in the usual way; but, if his conduct interferes with the progress of the rest of the class, he may have to be dealt with in the same way as the unruly or "difficult" pupil. On the whole, backwardness (vtorogodnichestvo) is not excessive in Latvian schools, and there are usually not more than one or two cases in each class each year. There is also little absenteeism. If a pupil is absent for more than a couple of days, the teacher in charge of the class or "Class Leader" must visit the parents and find out the reason. If it is a case of truancy, the teacher must persuade the parents to exert their influence, by pointing out the importance of the child's remaining at school and completing his studies. The teacher's task becomes very difficult when there are parents who are not able to control their children very well and who, not having any education themselves, would, in fact, prefer to send their children to a trade school (remeslennoye uchilishche), or to a factory school. Cases of parents refusing to send a child to school are reported by the teachers to the Rayon Executive Committee (Rayispolkom). Cases of delinquency become the concern of the Schools Department of the Militia, and there are camps for juvenile offenders administered by the Militia.

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